

# The Campaign For Real Ale HERTFORDSHIRE NEWSLETTER

April 1978 . . . . Number 3

## 1978 Hertfordshire Guide

Out this month is the 1978 edition of 'Real Draught Beer in Hertfordshire' which will be on sale in pubs and bookshops around the county. The guide has been extended to 56 pages to include pub drawings, town maps and the extra one hundred or so pubs which have converted to real beer in the county since last June. There's a fold-out map which will enable you to see where you're going while flicking through the pages and there are articles about McMullens brewery (seen below), Rayments, CAMRA, real ale and details of the various breweries now represented in Hertfordshire and the beers they produce. The guide provides invaluable information and is a must for the beer drinker in Hertfordshire and at thirty pence

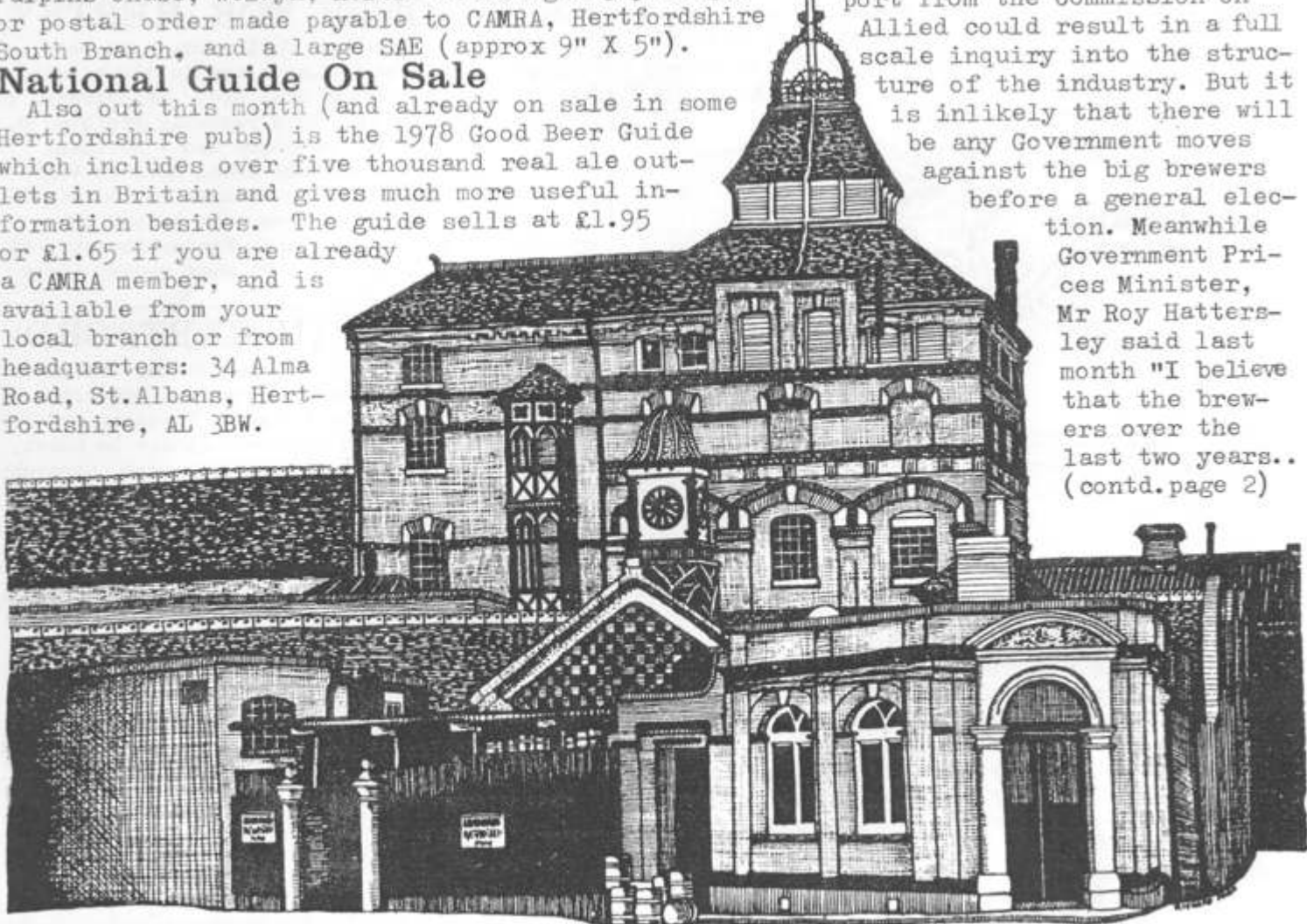
(just the price of a pint) will direct you to every known outlet for real ale in the county. If you want a copy via the post please write to Dave Burns, 11 Turpins Chase, Welwyn, Herts - sending a 30p cheque or postal order made payable to CAMRA, Hertfordshire South Branch, and a large SAE (approx 9" X 5").

### National Guide On Sale

Also out this month (and already on sale in some Hertfordshire pubs) is the 1978 Good Beer Guide which includes over five thousand real ale outlets in Britain and gives much more useful information besides. The guide sells at £1.95 or £1.65 if you are already a CAMRA member, and is available from your local branch or from headquarters: 34 Alma Road, St. Albans, Hertfordshire, AL 3BW.

### Prices War

The Prices Commission's report of their investigation into Allied Breweries is due this month, which should prove interesting - a critical report from the Commission on Allied could result in a full scale inquiry into the structure of the industry. But it is unlikely that there will be any Government moves against the big brewers before a general election. Meanwhile Government Prices Minister, Mr Roy Hattersley said last month "I believe that the brewers over the last two years.. (contd. page 2)



# SPOTLIGHT SOUTH - WEST

## RICKMANSWORTH

The trouble with Rickmansworth is that it is hardly pub crawl material - true, there are five real ale outlets - but four are Ind Coope and the other is the Batchworth Arms (1) a restaurant with a small bar selling Courage beers at premium prices. The four Ind Coope houses are The Feathers (2), The Halfway House (3) and The Keystone (4 - in the shopping precinct) and The White Bear (5), and all three Ind Coope cask-conditioned beers are available in the town.

### Swapping

The Halfway House and White Bear are both on the list of pubs to be swapped with Courage and will hopefully retain real ale, and The Fox and Hounds, at present a fizz-only Ind Coope house in the High Street is being swapped with Bass-Charrington, who have no tied houses in south-west Hertfordshire. It remains to be seen what their dispensing policy will be but hopefully they may note the success of the two pubs leased to Charles Wells in St. Albans and Borehamwood (both now selling large amounts of real ale - perhaps because they are 'foreign' beers to south Hertfordshire) and install hand-pumps for Bass and Charrington's IPA.

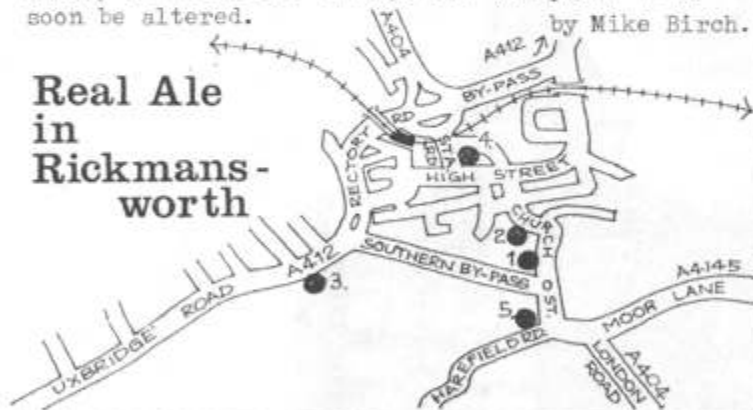
### Change Due

The real icing on the cake would be if Greene King reversed their policy of pressurisation at The Coach and Horses, a pleasant pub also in the High Street.

### Worst Town?

At the February Hertfordshire South branch meeting held in nearby Croxley Green, a member described Rickmansworth as the worst town in the county to drink in. I hope his viewpoint will soon be altered.

### Real Ale in Rickmansworth



### Prices (from Page One)

...have made price increases which were far too frequent and in many cases were unnecessary". The trouble is that at the moment it seems to be a case of too many words and not enough action. We'll have to wait and see what the report finds.

## NEW IDEA AT BARLEY MOW

The Barley Mow in Tyttenhanger has recently started selling Paine's EG and Brakspear's bitter in addition to the existing range. Landlord, John Blackwell has hit upon the rather good idea of having special brewery weekends where all of a brewer's real beers are made available at the pub together with promotional material, mats and pamphlets. Recent tries with Greene King and Brakspears have proved to be very successful and John is thinking of a Marston's weekend perhaps.

## GREENE KING: No Real Ale



A Greene King spokesman said a few months ago that the company would be willing to try unpressurised dispense in an area where all their houses are pressurised. I think we have a case here in the south-west of the county where Greene King have six tied houses - two in Watford and one apiece in Chorleywood, Croxley Green, Leavesden and Rickmansworth - all sadly under the influence of fizz. I think Greene King should install handpumps and bring some relief to an Ind Coope dominated area. The figure mentioned by Greene King was 25% of their pubs in an area should sell real beer - so at least one should sell it.

### Gas Tap

Most of the houses mentioned above use a pressure tap similar in appearance to a miniature handpump. One has recently placed these below the bar level with only the tops of the handles showing. Why the pretence? Another has hand-pumps (non-working) with pump clips, but the beer comes from a pressure tap concealed below the bar. So beware, be safe and consult the local beer guide.

by Mike Birch



## Membership

Details of membership (£4.00) can be obtained from The Membership Secretary, CAMRA, 34 Alma Road, St. Albans, Hertfordshire.

## SHIPSTONES FOR HERTS?

Rumours are rife that Shipstones have been sounding out free houses close to the M1 with the view to supplying real ale. Shipstones, who hail from Nottingham have recently resisted a take over bid from the dairy men - Northern Foods. No doubt the local CAMRA members vigorous local campaign which amassed 20,000 signatures to a petition in one week helped Shipstones to fend off Northern Foods. However, it is still a possibility that some shareholders may change their minds.

## MARSTONS IN HERTFORD

Marstons, a recent newcomer to Hertfordshire, are one of the largest independent breweries - from Burton-on-Trent. Marston, Thompson and Evershed, as they should more officially be known, have a surprisingly wide trading area, stretching from Cumbria through the Midlands to Hampshire - this large area being the result of various brewery acquisitions and amalgamations. Of the 600 tied houses, 500 sell real ale and the company brew one of the largest ranges of real ale in the country including Pedigree (OG 1043 and now available at The White Horse, Hertford), Merry Monk, which at OG 1043 is the strongest mild in Britain and Owd Roger with a lethal OG of 1080 which is not so widely available in draught form but more common in bottles. Burton Bitter (OG 1037) and Dark Mild (OG 1032) are also brewed.

### Draw Tickets

Please send your Derby draw ticket stubs in through your local branch. The branch who sells the most tickets wins a barrel of beer.



# CALLING LAGER DRINKERS

- - - What, me? I'm surprised your little magazine bothers to write articles for sophisticated people like me.

Sophisticated.....?

- - - Yes - none of your flat old English beer for me. I like the Continental taste - those Scandinavians know what they're doing when they brew a good lager, you know.

Like Carlsberg, or Tuborg?

- - - That's right.

Mmm, they are brewed in the far north - Northampton, and Burton on Trent.

- - - Well, that Dutch stuff must be good - they even have continentals advertising it on telly.

Heineken you mean?

- - - Yes, or that Belgian stuff, Stella Artois.

That's right. Both brewed by Whitbread, very likely at Luton. Very exotic - can't say I've noticed many Belgians in Luton.

- - - Well, you can't tell me all that German lager is imitation. They really know what they're doing - all those bierkellers....

You mean Steingold and Rheingold, Kellerbrau and Ayingerbrau?

- - - Surely, a good pint of the real German wallop, that.

Yes, they really know how to brew German lager - in Hertford, Oldham, Bedford and Tadcaster - very romantic, full of bierkellers and busty frauleins in Oldham.

- - - Well, I'm stumped.

Have a drink to help you recover, what about a pint of real mild?

- - - Mild, you must be joking. That weak stuff, made from the old dregs.

Well, it's as strong as a lot of your lagers - stronger than some.

- - - We'll have a couple of pints then. Barman, there should be a few pence change from this pound note.

A few pence? You can buy three pints of mild for every two of your lager.....

**FACT** In 1977, one pint of beer in every four brewed in Britain was lager. At those prices, and at that strength, the brewers must be laughing all the way to the bank. And they are. Why not drink them a toast - in a pint of traditional British mild. by Peter Lerner

Watch out for 'Make May a Mild Month' socials and meetings being organised by the Hertfordshire branches of the Campaign during May and the mild information sheet which gives fuller details of mild and the events around the county. Make sure you get along to one of the socials - there's only about a dozen days during May when there aren't meetings. Above all, help promote mild by going out and drinking it!

# Real Cider

Good news this month from the Baker's Dozen in Bishop's Stortford where traditional draught cider is now on sale. Apart from the West Herts Sports and Social Club, where Bulmer's dry cider is available during the summer, this is the only outlet in the county for the real stuff.

## Uneconomic

Traditional draught cider is still made in small farmhouses in Kent and the West Country although, sadly, their numbers are diminishing due, in the main, to recent changes in taxation which have made them uneconomic. At one time Hertfordshire could boast its own cider but the last surviving firm, Wrights of Walkern now make only soft drinks and bottled, non-real cider made from apple concentrates.

## Bulmers & Taunton

For supplies in this county we must look to Bulmers and the Taunton Cider Company - a sad reflection on British cider manufacture which has suffered from take-over and closure to a far greater extent than has the brewing of beer. Both these companies have close ties with the 'Big Six' national brewers, the Taunton Cider Company being wholly owned by Courage. They also supply cider (or at least what passes for it) to many of the smaller brewers. Hence any pub supplied with their keg and bottled products should stand a fair chance of obtaining the real variety. The Baker's Dozen, for instance, obtain theirs from McMullens.

## More Cider

All the above goes to show that you don't have to be in the West Country to sell decent cider - it's available right here in Hertfordshire. So landlords please take note: if you're already selling good beer, why stop there?, you could be serving good cider too! by Dave Burns



## Everard's Four

The recent spread of Everard's real beers away from their Leicestershire area to the south-east is quite remarkable considering that only three years ago the company had turned its back on selling unpressurised ale. Like so many of the smaller breweries, Everard's saw their future lying with the fizzy type of beer being heavily promoted by the big brewers. In 1975, probably due to the real ale revival which was beginning to gain momentum, the company reintroduced cask-conditioned Old Original with an original gravity of 1050 (making it one of the strongest draught beers now available in Hertfordshire). More recently Everards have taken to serving their Tiger bitter, Beacon bitter and mild by traditional methods although sadly of the company's 134 tied houses only a few sell real ale. The Countryman (Chipping), The White Horse (Hertford) and The Wicked Lady (Wheathampstead) are new local Hertfordshire outlets for Everard's Old Original and Tiger.

## PUB NEWS

**Buntingford** The Shah is now selling Wethered's Bitter on handpumps.

**Cottered** The Bell now sells Burton Ale.

**Oxhey** The Villiers now sells Ind Coope Bitter and Mild.

**Royston** The Old Bull now has Paine's E.G.

# What's On

## HERTFORDSHIRE SOUTH BRANCH

- Apr 10 April Branch Meeting  
The Dimsdale Arms, Fore Street, Hertford (Mac's) 8pm. Real Ale in the meeting room. Guest Speaker: Mr Edwards, retiring head brewer at McMullens.
- May 1 May Day Mild Social with Herts Nth. Branch at The White Horse, Burnham Green (Ind Coope). Starts early evening and features pub games competitions between the two branches and the pub (including tug-of-war/darts)
- May 7 Sunday lunchtime mild social at The Rose and Crown, Essendon (Ind Coope)
- May 9 Mild social at The Royal Oak, West Hyde (Wethereds) 8.30pm.
- May 16 May Branch Meeting  
The Garibaldi, Albert Street, St.Albans (Ind Coope) 8pm. The meeting will include a talk from Roger Protz, editor of What's Brewing and an auction of brewery paraphernalia.
- May 20 A Saturday brewery visit to Hook Norton: Further details from Jim Ax-ford, 117 Queens Road, Watford.
- May 23 Mild Social at The Woodman, Chapmore End (Greene King) 8pm.
- May 30 Mild Social at The Old Rose and Crown, Ware (McMullens) 8pm.

## HERTFORDSHIRE NORTH BRANCH

- Apr 12 April Branch Meeting  
The George, Bucklersbury, Hitchin (Ind Coope) 8pm. Features a talk from James Lynch, Chairman of the Campaign's National Executive.
- Apr 19 Social at The Boar's Head, Royston (Bass and Greene King) 8pm, with Cambridge Branch.
- Apr 26 Mild Social at The Orange Tree, Hitchin (McMullens) 8pm.
- May 1 See Herts. South branch.
- May 6 Saturday evening mild social at The Chaise and Pair, Barkway (Greene King) 8pm
- May 10 May Branch Meeting  
The Roebuck, Broadwater, Stevenage (Rayments) 8pm.
- May 14 Sunday lunchtime mild social at The Chequers, Woolmer Green (Ind Coope)
- May 17 Mild Social at The Plough, Ley Green (Greene King) 8pm.
- May 21 Sunday lunchtime mild social at The Sailor Boy, Walsworth (Wethereds). Weekend of the Water Festival.
- May 24 Mild Social at The George, Baldock (Greene King) 8pm.
- May 31 Mild Social at The Goat, Codicote (Ind Coope) 8pm.

## HERTS/ESSEX BORDERS BRANCH

- Apr 24 April Branch Meeting  
The Merry Fiddlers, Fiddlers Hamlet Near Epping (Ind Coope) 8pm.
- Apr 17 Social at The Old Maltings in Bishop's Stortford (Free House with a variety of real ales) 8pm.
- May 9 Mild Social at The Nag's Head, Little Hadham (Rayments) 8pm.
- May 16 May Branch Meeting  
The Coach and Horses, Waltham Abbey (McMullens) 8pm.
- May 22 Mild Social at The Black Horse, White Roding (Ridleys) 8pm.

## Newsletter

The Hertfordshire Newsletter is produced by the Herts South, Herts North and Herts/Essex Borders branches of CAMRA. Any contributions/information should reach the editor by the first day of the month: Les Middlewood, 81a Linden Way, Southgate, London, N14 4NG. Branch Contacts:

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